

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Cindy Fox

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Bluffsvew Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7111 Linworth Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Columbus OH 43235-5147  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Franklin County

Telephone (614) 450-5100

Fax (614) 883-2710

Web site/URL

https://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/

Domain/15

E-mail cfox@wscloud.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Trent Bowers

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail towers@wscloud.org

District Name Worthington City School District Tel. (614) 450-6000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Jennifer Best

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 3 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 18 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	40	36	76
1	50	42	92
2	38	28	66
3	34	44	78
4	49	25	74
5	45	29	74
6	41	35	76
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	297	239	536

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 7 % Asian
  - 5 % Black or African American
  - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 75 % White
  - 8 % Two or more races
- 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 6%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	15
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	27
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	487
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5%  
25 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Akan, Arabic, Chinese, Filipino, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandingo, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14%  
Total number students who qualify: 73

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %  
61 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>20</u> Autism                 | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>18</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>38</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 16
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 24:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2001

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Our mission at Bluffsview Elementary School is to empower a community of learners who will change the world.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Bluffsview Elementary is a premier neighborhood school nestled in a medium-income, suburban community just outside of the Columbus, Ohio, metropolitan area. Our school serves 550 students in grades K-6, including specialized services for students on the autism spectrum. When Bluffsview opened its doors in the fall of 1991, the population was mostly homogenous, but as families from various cultural backgrounds have moved into our district, our population has become more heterogeneous and culturally rich. Our school population is not only culturally diverse, but socioeconomically diverse as well and includes multiple family dynamics. Despite the challenges that accompany these types of changes, student achievement is consistently high. Additionally, of the eleven elementary schools in the Worthington City School District, Bluffsview boasts the highest number of parent requests for registration from outside of our attendance area, with 12% of students attending through open enrollment.

Displayed in our front lobby, our framed 2000-2001 National Blue Ribbon Award welcomes everyone to Bluffsview. We believe this prestigious recognition is a perfect visual statement of our commitment to continued excellence and innovation along with our rigorous expectations for all.

Our tradition of academic excellence comes from the dedication of our staff, students, and families toward learning. Our goal is to ensure that students reach their potential by guiding their academic, social, and emotional development. The staff at Bluffsview provides their personal best each day and expects students to reciprocate with the same level of commitment. We believe the most effective way to reach each child is through building strong personal relationships in an inclusive, positive, and caring environment.

What began as a traditional leadership style with our inaugural principal has since transitioned to a shared leadership approach under our current principal. In 1991, staff members were hand-selected by the principal, as was typical for that time. Many years have passed since that opening day, but something that has been constant is staff retention, which continues to be among the highest in the district. Our current principal has served students, families, staff, and community for the past 16 years, and as part of her transition into the principal role, has re-designed staff selection into a unique interview process involving staff to hire top quality candidates. We hold each other accountable to the highest standards and pride ourselves on being a true National Blue Ribbon school. Staff, students, and families are an integral part of decision-making and share in our continued success. We are no longer seeking to simply showcase major events; every day is the event and our focus has shifted from milestone moments to day-to-day experiences and achievements.

As with all schools, Bluffsview is adapting to the many changes and challenges within our community and society. Building on an already established strong school community, we are investing our efforts into a more targeted approach to ensure that all students are accepted and welcomed. With funding from the district, building, and our Parent Teacher Association (PTA), eleven staff members attended a week long, extensive training in Responsive Classroom, an evidence-based approach to education that focuses on the strong relationship between academic success and social-emotional learning. This group serves as mentors for the remainder of the staff by providing lessons, activities, and guidance to help implement the program in every classroom. Students and staff are invested in being here, and children feel valued and included. They are more academically and socially invested in school. Additionally, everyone on staff is taking part in a meaningful book study centered on *The Power of Our Words* by Paula Denton. We are committed to its core principles of building trust, conveying faith in children's abilities, and supporting positive relationships, which all lead to empowering learners. Teaching students research-based strategies for self-management and regulation has also decreased disciplinary issues.

Our classroom practices reflect our commitment to excellence; we strive to develop academic, social, and emotional competencies that will empower our students to be creative thinkers and innovators who will change the world. While continuing to recognize academic achievement, empowering dreamers acknowledges the importance and significant impact of student engagement and creativity.

Numerous outreach activities bring parents and community members into our school. This happens through family events before, during, and after school; senior citizen tutors working with our primary students; and

therapy dogs for reading, to name a few. Recently, nearly 370 attended an exclusive after hours reading celebration at our local library. Our Bluffsview news anchor team of talented sixth graders creates video broadcasts that welcome new students, highlight student service groups and projects, conduct teacher interviews, and showcase daily happenings around the school. In addition, a high school mentorship program teams former students with at-risk younger students who benefit academically and emotionally from these personal relationships. Many staff members have been honored by requests to present high school graduation diplomas to former students, which exemplifies the strong connections and positive regard students have long after they leave Bluffsview.

It's about positive character, the strength of individuals, and accomplishments of others. It's about being kind to kids and being that kind of kid. It's about trying your hardest when you feel welcome, contributing the most when you feel of value, and learning the best when you are part of a loving community called school. It's about us, Bluffsview, a National Blue Ribbon-worthy school.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Bluffsvie Elementary School follows a balanced literacy framework aligned with Ohio State ELA standards. We integrate reading, writing, and phonics to create curriculum that supports diverse learners. Our reading curriculum provides engaging, rigorous, and authentic lessons through our daily instruction, which include interactive read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, critical thinking projects, and opportunities for independent reading. Teachers administer Benchmark Assessment Systems (BAS) reading selections at the beginning of the year, as well as throughout the year, to gather data indicative of students' needs. Bluffsvie teachers provide direct phonics instruction through the Foundations word study program in grades K-2 and Words Their Way in grades 3-6. Foundations systematically and comprehensively instructs students in phonemic awareness and word study, setting the foundation for decoding words and writing. Words Their Way provides differentiated phonics instruction that helps students excel as writers. Bluffsvie is successful because of our dedication to data-driven instruction. Our teachers carefully analyze BAS, running records, anecdotal notes, phonics assessments, and student writing to meet the specific needs of each child. Teachers use this data to provide impactful instruction. Individualized growth is achieved through identified reading clusters, intensive phonics instruction, and use of technology. Teachers are effective because they are provided with continuous professional development, access to instructional coaches, and collaboration opportunities with colleagues through teacher-based teamwork.

Bluffsvie also empowers writers through the Lucy Calkins Units of Study. We believe that writers learn to write by writing. Students have an opportunity to develop as writers through daily instruction and practice. Teachers nurture student growth through individual writing conferences. Bluffsvie identifies a school-wide writing goal that provides continuity of instruction across grade levels and measures growth three times a year. Bluffsvie's ultimate goal is to encourage students to develop a life-long love of literacy, apply critical thinking skills, and spark creativity.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

The core math curriculum at Bluffsvie Elementary School is guided by the Ohio State Standards and the eight mathematical practice standards designed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Our district chose to adopt Stepping Stones (K-5) and College Preparatory Mathematics (6-12) curricula to address the district goals of making thinking visible and increasing depth of knowledge. Students are able to make their thinking visible and engage in rigorous and challenging problem solving activities while working in a group setting. Teachers design and utilize Number Talks, student exemplars, and rich open-ended math tasks solved cooperatively in small groups in order to create a culture of empathy and support throughout our building. This allows students to share their various problem-solving strategies, thus creating an environment where all students have access to the curriculum. Teachers utilize various formative assessment tools like nationally normed Measure of Academic Performance (MAP) assessments through the Learning Continuum, student observation checklists, station work, whiteboard practice, entrance/exit tickets, pre-assessments, small unit checkpoints, and student interviews to better diagnose student learning needs including key areas for support and enrichment. Teachers analyze data in their Teacher Based Teams and group students into flexible instructional tiers that help guide instruction and levels of support. ST Math, Moby Max, and Khan Academy integrate technology to provide targeted remediation, enrichment, and individual learning tasks based on pre-assessment scores. Bluffsvie teachers strive to create a community of problem solvers who can make their thinking visible through open-ended tasks and which allows access to all students.

#### **1c. Science:**

K-6 Science emphasizes hands-on learning experiences focusing on the Ohio Learning Standards as well as the Next Generation Science Standards. The Ohio Learning Standards scaffold learning throughout grade

levels using a scope and sequence. Bluffview uses Science Fusion, Worthington's adopted science curriculum, both print and virtual, that integrates rich writing tasks and problem solving. MAP assessment data shows areas of strengths and weaknesses broken down by unit of study. The data also provides specific learning targets for individual students and the next steps in their learning. Additionally, Ohio State Assessments provide data regarding the skills and concepts needing addressed in greater depth through our instruction.

Across classrooms, many instructional approaches are utilized to reach diverse learners. One approach is utilizing inquiry-based learning. Teachers act as facilitators, posing scientific questions that drive student learning. Students are asked to explore, engage, and explain their understandings of learning outcomes. This approach allows students to take ownership over their learning and supports a range of student understanding and needs. Additionally, all grade levels implement experiments to develop critical thinking skills. Differentiation occurs during hands-on experiences by providing classroom support including various levels of texts, innovative technology, peer collaboration, and individual teacher conferences. To provide authentic learning, grades K-6 welcome community members, Metro Parks, Columbus Zoo, Ohio Energy Project, and The United States Air Force to provide onsite learning experiences. Technology based support helps us to make thinking visible in new and creative ways. GIZMO, a technology-based curriculum resource, provides students with online science simulations, which allow students to interact with science processes and global concepts in unique ways. Google Classroom is utilized as a platform for student collaboration and as a support for literacy in the content areas. At Bluffview, science is more than a content area of study; it is an avenue to encourage students' curiosity about the world around them.

#### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Worthington's Social Studies curriculum is aligned to the Ohio State Standards. These standards are organized by strands, themes, topics, and content statements within the following disciplines: history, geography, government, and economics. Based on grade level curriculum, classrooms utilize district adopted resources that provide students with tools to participate in inquiry and problem-based learning. Resources, such as Scholastic News, Social Studies Weekly, and Newsela, are used to incorporate current events and embed literacy in both reading and writing for our learners. The district also provides curriculum maps for every grade level emphasizing detailed learning targets, content elaboration, and model instructional units. Online resources help students research topics, formulate opinions, and develop argumentative essays. Students benefit from opportunities within the community, such as field trips to Junior Achievement Biztown, Olde Worthington Days, Worthington City Hall, sixth grade camp, and The Ohio State House, to enhance their learning through participation in simulations and role-playing activities. Bluffview teachers utilize the diverse expertise of our parent population by inviting them to share their experiences and knowledge of topics that align to the curriculum. Bluffview strives to promote civic competence for all students, that they may have the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required to be active and engaged participants in public life.

#### **1e. For secondary schools:**

#### **1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

### **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Bluffview Elementary School takes great pride in its daily related arts program. All students receive instruction in visual arts, music, physical education, and library/technology on a four-day rotating schedule. Each subject is taught by certified related arts teachers.

Messy hands, happy faces, a buzz of excitement, and the smell of paint; the Bluffview art room welcomes wild ideas and exploring young minds. Students dive into their creativity with a wide variety of materials

that span from traditional art making to engineering art through cardboard creations. They are encouraged to think outside the box and express themselves through their art. By weaving in key artists and contextual components in each lesson, students learn about national and global cultures. Students are encouraged to focus on the process of art making while striving to create a quality product. They work through challenges by thinking like artists and learning how to use materials to express their ideas. All children have the opportunity to shine by sharing their uniqueness in a safe and nurturing space where they are supported by their peers and acknowledged for their contributions. Their artwork is displayed throughout the hallways of Bluffsvew and within classrooms; an honor which is gained through a designated peer compliment discussion and art critique. Through this process, students become a community of artists, continuously growing and building upon their skills through the artwork they have created.

Singing, dancing, playing instruments, listening to and analyzing music, improvising, creating, and composing music all happen on a daily basis in our music room. Students develop critical thinking, cooperation, and music literacy skills while also making connections to other subjects and the world around them. Students also learn to express their thoughts and emotions through music. Concerts are performed each year by all third and fifth grade students. Our school choir, Music Makers, offered to students in grades 4-6, meets weekly with an average membership of 40 students. Fifth and sixth graders may choose to take orchestra, and sixth grade students may also take band; each group serves 15-40 students per year. Ukulele is offered to sixth graders as an optional course, serving 20 students per year. Student performers are showcased during school-wide assemblies as well as evening performances.

Bluffsvew's Physical Education (PE) and Wellness program takes on a life of its own within the school community while integrating character building and life-skills that are reflective of our school's core beliefs and values. The importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, competitive intensity, problem-solving, and leadership are intentionally emphasized through various sports and fitness activities, as well as personal attributes such as positivity, perseverance, and grit. Students are provided opportunities to develop and express these skills above and beyond the fitness and sports skills that are acquired through regular physical education classes. Intermediate students volunteer to serve on our Sports Council which plans, coordinates, and manages various aspects of the PE and Wellness program. School-wide fitness is promoted via our annual walk-a-thon and Field Day. In the fall, we offer Girls On the Run to girls in grades 3-5, as well as cross country club to all students K-6. Bluffsvew's nationally recognized archery program is open to students in grades 4-6 who have competed at the state, national, and world championship levels and, most recently, on March 17, 2019, took first place in Ohio's National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) tournament. Nearly 50% of our Bluffsvew students participate in fall and winter archery clubs, and approximately 60 of those students compete at the team level. Not only was Bluffsvew the first suburban school to offer an archery program in the state of Ohio, the program has become a model for other district and area schools, as well.

Promoting a love of reading and learning is at the heart of our library. Read-alouds, student choice, author visits, book fairs, diverse literature, and student book recommendations are key pieces of our reading culture. Students think critically and creatively as they learn to research and show their findings in different ways. Technology tools are used to enhance learning and show student thinking. Skills in coding, typing, stop-motion animation, digital storytelling, word processing, world wide web navigation, and digital citizenship are practiced on a regular basis. All students are encouraged to create, play, and tinker in our Library MakerSpace which includes materials such as Legos, 3D pens, 3D printers, sewing machines, metal stamping, art and craft supplies, recyclable materials, robotics, and more. A strong partnership with our public library brings librarians to our school for book talks, summer reading program information, and checkout of public materials. Our PTA promotes our students' love of literacy by bringing both locally aspiring authors and well-known children's authors to Bluffsvew. Authors share details of their craft with students while encouraging our young writers. Last spring, our Library Media Specialist led a school-wide effort in a national contest to win a visit from a well known children's author. Students, staff, and families rallied for six weeks to maintain their first place standing and gained the support of more than 10,000 community members. While coming in second place didn't earn a visit from this author, it led to an even more important prize – the actualization of a strong school community built on teamwork, perseverance, and the strength of creative problem-solving that is generated through positivity.

### 3. Special Populations:

#### Instruction:

Our goal is to empower students of all backgrounds and capabilities to reach their fullest potential. We are comprised of various special populations including students with disabilities, ranging from mild to severe; ELL students; and gifted learners.

Teachers and specialists utilize inquiry-based learning that allows for differentiation. Targeted instruction addresses needs in the areas of phonemic awareness, word analysis, fluency and reading comprehension. A systematic multi-sensory approach is used for decoding, encoding, and vocabulary instruction. Reading comprehension instruction focuses on the mastery of visualization, analyzing text, and making meaningful connections. This skill development prepares students to independently read and understand complex texts.

The district Enriched Projects Program (EPP) serves students identified as gifted in both math and superior cognitive ability. Students identified for math meet 75 minutes each day with a Gifted Intervention Specialist. Students participate in a compacted math curriculum, as well as a variety of projects to extend their thinking. Bluffsvew follows the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) for students identified as gifted in the area of English Language Arts. The SCGM is an inclusion model in which students with exceptional learning needs are integrated into mixed-ability classrooms, and highly qualified teachers provide appropriate differentiation opportunities.

#### Interventions:

A variety of interventions are utilized within the classrooms for both academic and behavioral needs. Teachers and specialists work closely to maintain consistency. Specialists work with students both within and outside of the classroom, pulling small groups, differentiating assignments, and assisting with engagement and work completion. Based upon careful observations and analyses of assessments, our diverse learners receive intensive behavioral, social, emotional, and academic interventions from highly qualified Special Education, ELL, and Reading teachers. By utilizing programs such as Reading Recovery, Leveled Literacy Intervention, Double Dose Foundations, Wilson Reading, Making Connections, News-2-You, Unique Learning System, Math U See, Simple Math, The Zones of Regulation, Social Emotional Learning, and more, we are closing the achievement gap for both our Economically Disadvantaged and Students with Disabilities subgroups based on our state testing data.

A unique aspect of Bluffsvew is our commitment to serving students on the Autism Spectrum. By staff request, Bluffsvew houses three district wide Structured Communication Learning Centers (SCLC), providing a K-6 continuum of learning for our students who most struggle with change and relationship building. Our SCLC is an integral part of our students' social and emotional development, both typical and those with special needs. Our goal is to develop an all-inclusive approach to learning by giving students access to the curriculum with their typical peers. We support student needs by providing them with periods of brain and body breaks throughout the day to enable a balanced sensory system. The connection between sensory integration and academic learning promotes increased concentration, heightened awareness, increased brain function and the promotion of social interactions. SCLC provides activities that target stress relief, tactile stimulation, and body awareness.

#### Assessments:

All programs use a variety of formative and summative assessments, including pre/post unit testing, MAP, ST Math, Khan Academy Mastery Assessments, Clay's Observation Survey, BAS, WIST, WADE, AimsWeb, and state assessments. We also utilize our specialists for students who have specific accommodations in their IEP, 504, or ELL program. Students following the Ohio Extended Learning Standards are assessed through the Alternate Assessment. Students in the SCLC also follow a social curriculum and are provided the opportunity to practice and master these skills through community involvement.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

We're empowering a community of learners who will change the world! While that's not the easiest endeavor, the goal at Bluffsview Elementary is to provide a culture where not only the students feel empowered to learn and grow, but those who teach them do as well.

When the bell sounds at 8:00 a.m., students gather in a circle beside their teacher to begin their day. During morning announcements, students are recognized for their leadership and kind acts using "Pawsitive" character slips filled out by a fellow student, a teacher, or parent. Following our school principal's daily message—"Let's make it a great day!"—the morning meeting begins in each classroom. Using the Responsive Classroom approach, the morning meeting sets a tone for respectful learning, while building a strong sense of community and rapport. The children begin their day ready to succeed, both academically and emotionally.

Our "Empowering Dreamers" gallery is a display of student, staff, and families' expression through art. Each year we have a different theme for the gallery to which all students contribute. When family and community members visit, they are encouraged to use the art supplies available for creating and contributing work to the gallery. This unique space brightens Bluffsview's environment and exemplifies our commitment to creativity and character building.

There is an incredible amount of compassion that creates a tight bond with the staff members, which goes beyond professional support. Our principal truly has an "open door" policy, where staff members consistently drop in for a piece of chocolate or a quick "pep talk" when they are just having "one of those days!" She models the importance of caring for and about others, and she cultivates an environment of kindness. Our staff feels valued, and we are recognized on a regular basis by each other, our principal, our parents, and community. We provide birthday treats for each other, have staff potlucks, and enjoy holiday meals together. When one of our staff members is going through a life changing event, we rally and provide support.

We all work together at Bluffsview to support, and more importantly, truly care for each other, our students, and our families. As one parent notes, "You humbly serve, not just my child, but all of the children at Bluffsview." With this kind of love and support, we all grow abundantly.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parents and community members are an integral part of student success and school improvement at Bluffsview. Parents and community members are valued; they invest their time, talent and expertise in order to maximize student growth and achievement.

Staff, families, and community members work collaboratively to enhance student achievement by connecting classroom learning to authentic learning experiences. Olde Worthington Day, an event planned and led by parents and docents from the Worthington Historical Society, exemplifies this type of immersion experience. After learning in the classroom about the local community and change over time, third grade students are engaged in a day-long role play experiencing life as a pioneer. Similarly, fifth grade students, with the support of parent and community volunteers, participate in Junior Achievement BizTown, a global, nonprofit youth organization that brings economic decision-making to life. Students utilize their knowledge of economic standards mastered in the classroom and apply those in a real world simulation of a free enterprise system.

There are support systems in place to help individual learners, such as high school mentors in our Wolves for Cubs mentorship program, Linworth Baptist Church volunteers, and parent volunteers. These partnerships support student growth through specific interventions created by teachers. For example, the volunteer coordinator for the Linworth Baptist Church worked in collaboration with our school principal to

create a fluency program based on reading research done by Dr. Timothy Rasinski. Teachers identify students who would benefit from weekly practice with one of the volunteers. In addition, we have mental health specialists and counselors working with students and families, and connecting them with necessary resources, such as Family Mentorship Program. This group provides “Buddy Boxes” that go home with the children each Friday in order to provide enough food for each day of the weekend. These additional supports contribute to student achievement by providing tools and teaching students strategies in order to overcome barriers to success.

Communication with parents and the greater community occurs through daily social media posts, weekly emails, monthly newsletters, and a continually updated school website. Ongoing teacher communication occurs through our student and parent portal, Infinite Campus, where grades and homework completion can be accessed. In addition, student planners, emails, and phone calls are utilized daily. Our Fall Curriculum Night provides an opportunity for parents to learn about the academic and social aspects of their child’s day at Bluffview. Biannual conferences are scheduled with every parent in order to facilitate a partnership with the teacher in maximizing their child’s potential. Bilingual assistants and interpreters are available for these events and as needed throughout the year so students and parents whose home language is not English can access information in their native language. Through these established practices, information about our school is easily accessible to parents and community members.

Bluffview is a school where everyone—students, staff, families, and the community—contribute to the school’s success and achievement.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Bluffview’s professional development approach follows the Worthington City Schools Professional Learning Framework which states “professional learning that leads to sustained implementation and impact on student learning requires independent and job-embedded learning.” Worthington’s framework was created in collaboration with the district professional development advisory council (PDAC) to align with the state standards for teacher development.

The Building Leadership Team (BLT) consists of the principal, the instructional coach, and staff members. The BLT utilizes data collected throughout the year to develop professional activities. For example, as our student population shifted, data suggested the need for professional learning focused on students’ social-emotional needs. Thus, our BLT made the decision to send grade level representatives and several specialists to a five-day professional learning workshop in Responsive Classroom practices. This opportunity was made possible due to endorsement and financial backing from the district, our building professional development funds, and Bluffview’s PTA Executive Board. All staff members have been responsible for leading implementation of the structures and strategies of this approach.

In alignment with the district’s literacy and mathematics standards, professional development is delivered monthly to all staff members and continued throughout the year in teacher based teams. Based on teacher feedback, the BLT recently identified academic areas of need in math fluency and literacy. BLT members developed professional learning for staff members that included research around how students developmentally gain fluency with mathematical skills and concepts. Teachers modeled the use of Number Talks and Box of Facts that could be used immediately in their classrooms. Ongoing collaboration between the reading specialist and classroom teachers supports work to analyze running records in order to improve reading instruction. In addition, a community member and former Lucy Calkins consultant, volunteers her expertise on writing instructional strategies.

When teachers identify a professional growth need, they can collaborate with our instructional coach. A complete coaching cycle includes observation, modeling, and video reflection leading to individual professional growth that positively impacts student achievement.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

At the core of Bluffsview's leadership is our collective focus on providing a strong academic, social, and emotional foundation for those who are most impacted by our work—our students. Every decision, no matter how large or seemingly small, places our students' best interests at the center.

Student leadership is nurtured from the very first day students enter Bluffsview. Students are immersed in a building culture of respect and responsibility. They are co-creators of classroom expectations to ensure that everyone's hopes and dreams for their learning are met. Students model positive community leadership throughout the day by walking quietly in the hall, cleaning up after themselves in the cafeteria, and taking care of classroom materials and playground equipment. Intermediate students assist our younger learners through academic partnerships in core content areas; writing together, reading together, and practicing math skills.

As students enter higher grade levels, more specialized leadership opportunities present themselves. Students can grow their leadership skills through our peer mediation program, where our 5th and 6th grade students receive training to assist with resolving student conflicts at recess. Students may also take a leadership role as part of one of three service learning groups, each of which is dedicated to helping our building, community, or a local charity. Students are provided the opportunity to be part of these groups by volunteering, being elected by peers, or being selected by teachers and our principal. Positions of responsibility, such as Safety Patrol, Flag Corp, Sports Council, and Bluffsview News, are volunteer leadership positions with varying levels of commitment and responsibility.

Parent leadership at Bluffsview focuses on providing students with learning opportunities that encourage critical thinking and creativity, as well as extend and support the curriculum. Each year a substantial part of our PTA fundraising is committed to providing additional technology for classrooms. Community resources, such as the Center of Science and Industry (COSI) and the Columbus Zoo, provide on-site learning opportunities that are funded through PTA. Author visits, Artists in Residence, Science Night, Cardboard Challenge, and staff professional development are all financially supported by our PTA.

Teacher leadership begins the day teachers are hired. Each teacher is selected based on the individual strengths they bring to our school community. Teachers are trusted leaders with the autonomy to make instructional, as well as management decisions, on a day-to-day basis that ensure student growth and achievement. There is an unspoken faith in their expertise and understanding of their students.

Bluffsview has several different leadership teams, each comprised of teachers with unique skill sets. We work as a well-oiled machine, building on our strengths for the greater good of our school community. We have a variety of specialized teams including Multi-Tier Systems of Support, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, School Safety, Medical, Crisis Prevention and Intervention, Mental Health, Building Leadership Team, and Teacher Based Teams. Our leadership teams work interdependently to ensure that all students are known, recognized, and have the needed supports in place to reach their full potential.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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When students walk through the doors of Bluffsview Elementary, they immediately feel a sense of warmth. They know they are in a safe place where they feel valued and cared for... they belong! While there are many reasons Bluffsview is a successful school, the foundation for all of our work is based upon the strong relationships we build with our students, families, and each other.

The staff at Bluffsview share a common belief in the importance of the education of the whole child while setting high expectations for academic success. Bluffsview's student population has significantly changed since our doors opened in 1991; however, our level of academic excellence has not. As a staff, we have a strong collective efficacy. We truly believe that our unified efforts for children can, and will, impact student achievement and social-emotional growth. We have steadily maintained, and even exceeded, district and state academic measures all while keeping the heart of every child at the forefront of how we teach.

As part of our focus on relationship-building, we incorporate the Responsive Classroom approach in our daily practice of teaching and learning. The power of morning meetings can be seen and heard in all classrooms as students begin their day sitting together in an inclusive circle, greeting each other by name, listening, laughing, and engaging with their peers while learning the value of relationships. It is truly an amazing transformation of student behavior and understanding of their role within a classroom community. These skills carry over into our school community and eventually as our students head out into the world. By keeping relationships at the forefront of our practices, we are empowering a community of learners who will change the world!